628 through all the clans and is very rigorously carried out. The widow told us that although her brother had been dead for years, if any member of her clan met the man who killed him he would at once attack him and attempt to wipe out the stain of the blood that had been spilt by spilling more. A few years afterwards there was a combined terrible attack on the Sha-ma clan, when horrible revenge was taken. That story, however, comes later on.

522 While I was sitting by the fire writing up my diary Mr Long was talking away at a rapid rate, telling them all the wonders of the Nosuland beyond the sea. The widow was a good listener. I told Mr Long I was like a deaf man, watching their mouths going but unable to understand anything they were saying. Every now and again there was a very hearty laugh all round, and I joined in, though I had not the least idea where lay the point of the joke. If I could not join in the conversation I could closely watch the faces and dress of those around us. I found out that single girls have only one plait of hair, while married ones have two. There was a great laugh when this information was given me. I can imagine how shocked Chinese women would be if conversation had gone on in their presence on such matters. These Nosu women entered into all the jokes as English women would have, and it was a treat to see how jolly they were.

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123 I asked my guide to explain to the people that no one had ever before had such a chance of being in their homes as I, and that such a chance had only come once in my lifetime, and so I wanted to make the most of it. I told them that many Westerners would want to know all about the brave hill Nosu, and that if I could not give them the required information they would laugh at me. There was, however, no need for